

Hello everyone! And welcome to our Wednesday Word devotion for today, March 17, 2021! Thank you so much for tuning in and for taking this time out of your day to focus on God and focus on your faith.

Today is, of course, St. Patrick's Day, the annual day where we remember the patron saint of Ireland, Patrick, and all his good works to bring Christianity to the nation of Ireland. We also celebrate through various green paraphernalia, special foods and treats (I'm definitely a fan of the Shamrock Shake), and celebrations.

St. Patrick is, of course, usually associated with the Catholic Church, but today is listed as an official day of commemoration for Patrick in both the Lutheran and Episcopalian traditions as well. Patrick is remembered for many things, including his rise from being an enslaved farm worker in Ireland (he was originally born in England, fun fact), to escaping back home, and then returning to Ireland as a Christian missionary, and eventually serving as a bishop. He is also famous for many teachings, founding many churches, and may or may not have eradicated snakes out of Ireland. So for our devotion today, I'm going to focus on one of Patrick's famous teachings - the shamrock and the Trinity.

Legend has it that Patrick taught new converts to Christianity that the Holy Trinity was like a shamrock. The shamrock has three separate leaf sections that you can tell apart, but the shamrock itself is one being - one leaf with three distinct parts that create the whole. This is like the Holy Trinity, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (or Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) - three distinct beings within one God whom we worship. You can tell each of the three apart, but you cannot have one without the others - the three parts make up the whole.

So for our scripture readings and questions for reflection today, I invite you to join me in thinking about the Holy Trinity - three parts that make up the one whole God whom we worship.

Our reading today comes from 1 John 5:1-8:

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth. There are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree.

Our reflection questions for today:

How does the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, impact your relationship with God? Is there a part of the Trinity you'd like to know more about?

And now I invite you to join me in a moment of prayer:

Lord God, of every time and place, we give you thanks for the beloved saints who have come before us. Thank you for the ministry of St. Patrick, and the impact his works have on us even today. For all we have learned over the years, for all the ways we have interacted with you, for all the moments that have strengthened our faith in you, O Lord, we give you thanks and praise. Help us to see you in our fellow people, in your created world, and in the everyday moments that give us hope and love. We pray for the health and well-being of all our siblings in Christ, that they may know your deep and unending love. We pray to you, O God our creator, in the name of your Son Jesus, the human and divine Christ, and united with your Holy Spirit, breath of life, that moves and breathes life into us, into your world, and unites us with the whole communion of saints, now and always. Amen.

Go in peace, dear friends, have a beautiful day. Amen.